

Fulwar Skipwith¹⁸³ to John Gray & Thomas Blount

ST. PIERRE 24. Septem^r. 1790

Mess^{rs}. Jn^o. G & Thomas Blount

Gentlemen

The pleasure of writing you, I have from day to day since my arrival in this Island, been promising myself—& I should leave gratified my desire, with the prospect of affording some information respecting its markets & prospects, that would have proved acceptable; had not the anarchy & confusion of the times given an almost total Suspension to commerce—Inhabitants of every description of both town & country are, & have been three weeks under arms.—What are called the patriotic party, composed of the Martinique Regiment, (lately gained over from the opposite party) the citizens of this town & fort-royal, together with considerable number of volunteers from the adjacent french Islands; have possessed themselves of all the fortifications & Stores, & have marched against the Governor of the Island who at the head of his Council, a number of planters, color'd people, & a company of [2] Grenadiers have fled to a Strong hold in the interior part of the Island, where at present they confine themselves on the defensive—some little recontris have already happened which but too plainly prove an inveteracy, that must most likely terminate in the maddest excesses if not the ruin of the Island—an interference however is daily expected from France, an event alone in my opinion that can prevent one of those evils—The cause of these unhappy disputes appear to have originated more in a jealousy between town & country, than in a disposition in either party to oppose the revolution in France—Both conformably to a decree of the national Assembly, had agreed in establishing their colonial One [assembly, sic],—on their meeting the country interest was found greatly to over-rule—St. Pierre, therefore thought proper to withdraw her deputys, to oppose the proceedings of the Assembly, & finally to suspend them altogether—informing this body, the members had been chosen by the holders of lands [3] and negroes only—the towns people[,] possessed in no great degree of either[,] think themselves unfairly represented.

In tranquility there is vastly more American business done here than I had imagined—this port acting as it does as an

¹⁸³See page 81*n*. 138, above.